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REPORT ON A SURVEY OF ATTITUDES ON CURRENT POLITICAL ISSUES.

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IN JANUARY OF 1965, THE COLLEGE ASKED 477 POLITICAL SCIENCE I STUDENTS TO COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE INDICATING THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD SEVERAL CONTROVERSIAL CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS SHOWED A RELATION OF ATTITUDES TO SEX AND AGE. VERY GENERALLY, WOMEN STUDENTS HELD FEWER POLARIZED AND MORE PACIFISTIC OPINIONS IN POLITICAL MATTERS THAN MEN. MEN, AS A GROUP, INDICATED GREATER OPPOSITION TO CIVIL RIGHTS EFFORTS. OLDER STUDENTS SHOWED MORE UNFAVORABLE REACTIONS TO THE BERKELEY "FREE SPEECH" DEMONSTRATIONS. REPONSES TO EACH QUESTION ON THE FORM ARE ANALYZED IN DETAIL IN THE REPORT. (AD)

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REPORT ON A SURVEY OF ATTITUDES ON CURRENT POLITICAL ISSUES:

1. Should mainland China be allowed membership into the United Nations?
2. Were students justified in demonstrating during the recent "Freedom of Speech on Campus" issue at the U. C. Berkeley Campus?
3. Should the United States seek to expand trade with the Soviet Union and other Communist countries?
4. Should the United States invade Cuba?
5. Should the United States get out of Viet Nam?
6. Is Proposition 14, recently passed by California voters a good law, regardless of what the courts may say about it?
7. Will this year witness an increase in the number and intensity of Civil Rights demonstrations?

SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT OF

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY COLLEGE

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I Foreword

The content of this paper is based on the results of a statistical analysis of seven questions of a fifty question survey administered to Political Science I students by the Valley College Political Science Department in January of 1965. Those seven questions were felt to be of particular contemporary interest to the staff, both as teachers and students of Political Science. The reader will recognize that they are concerned with areas of inquiry which continue to generate heated debate throughout the academic community, in and out of the popular news media, and in the public at large.

The collection of the raw data in this survey is but the first step in any empirical study. And while the simple summation of responses into specific attitude categories is significant in and of itself, it is often the case that through a more rigorous statistical analysis we are able to gain additional meaningful insights from the data.

Briefly, (and more appropriately, to avoid boring the reader with the methodological considerations involved in this study, available upon request) the specific statistical method employed in this analysis was the chi square (x^2) test of independence. In short, for each question our null hypothesis (or straw man) was simply that no significant relationship existed between the five response categories (infra) and the two independent variables selected for analysis; the first, sex; the second, age. Thus, we were able to find, that in every instance but one, either one or both variables were determinants of student attitudes.

The x^2 test was made at the .05 and .01 levels of significance, wherein we were able to infer that where the null hypothesis was rejected, the relationships could be said to exist with either 95% or 99% confidence. (Normally, in social sciences studies of this sort, the .05 level of significance is sufficient to establish a relationship.)

It should be noted that each question includes interpretations that go beyond the simple inferences drawn from the data itself. There are at least two important reasons for this. First of all, isolated empirical studies which are concerned with but a part of the complex web of human behavior in political science can still lead us to but a relatively low order of generalization. Nevertheless, to the degree that we are able to compare our results with similar studies under comparable circumstances, these generalizations become valuable axioms of synchronic importance (i.e., limited in time). Secondly--and this applies to any discipline--the data becomes more meaningful if it can be integrated into a general body of theory--in this case, of human political behavior--that embraces broader explanatory and (hopefully) predictive value.

In this brief analysis, we are not so presumptive as to claim any simple truth beyond the plain logic employed in the presentation and interpretation of our findings. On the other hand, we have not been so cautious as to withold commenting on what we consider meaningful insights about student attitudes. Toward this end, we have alluded, in a few instances, to the results of independent research which we believe are supportive of our findings. And while recognizing that this study applies specifically to the Political Science I students who attended Valley College during the Fall semester of 1964, in our concluding remarks, we have made an attempt at extrapolating our findings on purely logical grounds--to a larger population of students to whom the data could apply.

Finally, in regard to our format, we have provided on the pages to follow a table indicating response categories and percentage breakdowns by sex and age immediately following each of the seven questions which are the subject of this analysis. Percentages will not always add (across) to 100 due to rounding. The absolute and percentage figures for the various groupings used in this study were as follows:

Grouping	Nr.	% of Total
All Respondents	477	100
By Sex:		
Males	274	57
Females	203	43
Total	477	100
By Age:		
18 or under	202	42
19 thru 21	172	36
22 thru 25	47	10
26 and over	56	12
Total	477	100

II Survey Questions

1. Mainland China should be allowed membership into the United Nations:

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	No Opinion	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Student Totals
	% Response Within Each Category					
All Students	10	20	17	18	35	477
	% Response Within Each Category, By Sex*					
Male	11	23	12	16	39	274
Female	8	18	24	20	31	203
	% Response Within Each Category, By Age Group**					
18 or under	10	18	21	18	33	202
19 - 21	9	23	16	16	36	172
22 - 25	8	21	13	23	34	47
26 and over	12	20	7	18	43	56

* X^2 Significant at .01 and .05 Level; df=4

** Null Hypothesis accepted; df=12

Opinions on whether or not mainland China should be allowed into the U.N. are indicative of significant divergencies in attitude between the sexes. The proportion of males in the "strongly agree" and "mildly agree" categories was significantly higher than the proportion of females. On the other hand, females displayed a greater tendency to give a "no opinion" or mildly disagree" answer. Although the most popular response, regardless of sex or age, was "strongly disagree" (35%), the proportion of men in this category was significantly greater than the proportion of women. Thus, while a plurality of both sexes "strongly disagree" on U.N. membership for Red China, there is a tendency toward a polarization of views on the maleside in contradistinction to the less "rigid" or "centrist" tendency on the part of the females.

The differences among the various age groups were not significant and are considered to be due to chance variation within the category to whose universe they apply.

2. Students were justified in demonstrating during the recent so-called "Freedom of Speech on Campus" issue at the U. of C. Berkeley campus:.

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	No Opinion	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Student Totals
	% Response Within Each Category					
All Students	14	17	10	24	35	477
	% Response Within Each Category, By Sex*					
Male	16	17	11	22	35	274
Female	11	18	9	26	36	203
	% Response Within Each Category, By Age Group**					
18 or under	13	21	11	24	31	202
19 - 21	17	14	9	23	37	172
22 - 25	15	19	2	36	28	47
26 and over	11	11	12	11	54	56

*Null hypothesis accepted; df=4

**X^2 significant at .05 level; df=12

On this particular item, sex was not a significant determinant of student attitudes. However, age does appear to make a difference. The most striking contrast is suggested by the fact that the highest proportion of respondents who "strongly disagreed" with student demonstrations at Berkeley were in the oldest age group. This was also the only group which had a majority (54%) in one response category. Again, a comparison of the 22-25 year olds with the 18 or under group showed a striking similarity in response patterns with the exception that the proportion of the younger group

with "no opinion" was significantly higher than for the 22-25 year olds. The latter however, showed significant strength in the "mildly disagree" column over all other age groups.

The 19-21 year olds, while second highest in condemnation of the Berkeley "rioters," counterbalanced this by showing the highest proportion of support (i.e., "strongly agreed") for the Berkeley student demonstrators.

The patterns of response are interesting for their apparent inconsistencies. For example, the 18 year and under group diverges significantly from its next closest age category, the 19-21 year old group, and tends toward closer identification with the 22-25 year olds. Part of the answer may well be that for the younger students, the authoritative and disciplinary attitudes from parents and elders hold a greater "restraining" influence upon their behavior--as manifested by a greater tendency toward a milder or "non-committal" position. In contrast, the most "radical" element falls in the 19-21 year age group, indicative perhaps of the "break" from parental influence with the resultant emphasis on individualism and non-conformist behavior. (Mario Savio is 22 years old.)

This 19-21 year old pattern of response appears to reverse itself within the older--and presumably more mature--22-25 year old group where moderate responses ("mildly" agree or disagree) increase significantly. In spite of this apparent "crazy-quilt" pattern, there is an overall tendency for attitudes on this question to move from left to right as the individual ages.

3. The United States should seek to expand trade with the Soviet Union and other Communist countries:

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	No Opinion	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Student Totals
	% Response Within Each Category					
All Students	14	31	13	20	22	477
	% Response Within Each Category, By Sex*					
Male	18	30	14	14	23	274
Female	9	32	10	29	20	203
	% Response Within Each Category, By Age Group**					
18 or under	13	33	14	22	17	202
19 - 21	13	33	12	17	24	172
22 - 25	23	15	8	19	34	47
26 and over	18	29	11	23	20	56

*X^2 significant at .01 and .05 level; df=4

**Null hypothesis accepted; df=12.

The highest response for this question fell in the "mildly agree" category (31%), although attitudes on both sides of the "no opinion" line are roughly comparable (45% agree to 42% disagree). Furthermore, we find that sex does make a difference in attitude. While the proportion of men expressing "no opinion" was higher, the women outvoted the men in the "mildly agree" and more significantly in the "mildly disagree" columns. At the two extreme ends of the scale, the men rank highest in preference.

Again, we see a tendency toward a polarization of views from the male side, whereas the females, while far from taking the non-committal attitude expressed on the China issue, (i.e., 24% gave a "no opinion" response as opposed to 10% here) clearly tended toward a less "rigid" position (i.e., "mildly" agree or disagree).

In this regard, it is interesting to note the similarity in response patterns within each sex between this question and the one on whether Red China should be allowed U.N. membership. Both questions are not only highly political but deal unequivocally with problems of U.S. foreign policy. Thus one might well be led to conclude that the "weaker" sex has acquired, if not a more liberal at least a less rigid outlook, due perhaps to its peculiarities of life experiences based on its sexual distinctiveness. Although this may well be a portion of the answer, related studies on the participation of women in politics indicate, in most instances, a significantly higher degree of political apathy on their part.

We suspect that the evidence shown here tends to confirm this finding. Consequently, we would argue that the polarization of views on the male side in contrast to the centripetal tendency amongst the women is actually more corroborative of the higher degree of commitment to politics within the male sex rather than an indication of conscious dispassion and calm on the part of females.

Age was not a significant factor in determining student attitudes on this question.

4. The United States should invade Cuba:

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	No Opinion	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Student Totals
	% Response Within Each Category					
All Students	7	12	11	15	55	477
	% Response Within Each Category, By Sex*					
Male	9	17	13	16	45	274
Female	3	6	9	13	68	203
	% Response Within Each Category, By Age Group**					
18 or under	6	14	7	13	58	202
19 - 21	6	11	13	15	55	172
22 - 25	6	17	13	15	49	47
26 and over	9	4	18	21	48	56

*X^2 significant at .01 and .05 level; df=4

**Null hypothesis accepted; df=12

Although a clear majority of students (55%) was opposed to an invasion of Cuba, there is a clear indication that the proportion of males in each category increases significantly as we move toward the more "aggressive" end of the attitude scale. Or stating it somewhat differently, as we move from a "strongly agree" position on invasion to a "strongly disagree" position, the proportion of women in each category shows a significant increase.

Also noteworthy is the fact that the proportion of women expressing no opinion is distinctly smaller than the proportion of men respondents. Thus, while previous questions have generally shown a greater degree of apathy and "mildness" on the distaff side, this particular issue saw the overwhelming majority of women (68%) "strongly disagree" to invasion as opposed to the male response of 45%. Whatever their degree of political ennui on questions of a more abstract nature (e.g., U.N. membership for Red China), the women demonstrate an unmistakably clear aversion to following an overt policy of "militarism." A somewhat prosaic, though not untenable assumption, might well be that manifest "war issues" such as the invasion of Cuba, are able to evoke deep-seated maternal "instincts" from within the fairer sex along with their attendant emphasis on the primacy of the preservation of home and family. Needless to say, the absolute percentage difference between the sexes on this particular item, is indicative of striking differences in certain values (political attitudes) held by each side.

Age is not a determinant of student attitude on this particular item. Although as before, differences exist, taken as a whole they are not significant and are considered to be due to chance variation within the category to whose universe they apply.

5. The United States should get out of Viet Nam:

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	No Opinion	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	% Response Within Each Category					Student Totals
All Students	9	9	13	17	52	477
	% Response Within Each Category, By Sex*					
Male	8	8	12	18	55	274
Female	11	10	13	17	49	203
	% Response Within Each Category, By Age Group**					
18 or Under	6	10	12	15	57	202
19 - 21	14	7	15	16	49	172
22 - 25	9	11	15	26	40	47
26 and over	5	9	5	23	57	56

*Null hypothesis accepted; df=4

**Null hypothesis accepted; df=12

This particular question is unique in this group. It is the only one where differences in attitude based on either sex or age were not significant. The proportion of men and women in each category were quite similar and while differentiation based on age showed clear percentage cleavages within the various groupings, there was no overall significance to the variation. Finally, it should be mentioned that the responses shown here were prior to the adoption by this country of its policy to bomb North Viet Nam.

6. Proposition 14, recently passed by California voters is a good law, regardless of what the courts may say about it:

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	No Opinion	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Student Totals
	% Response Within Each Category					
All Students	26	14	17	8	34	477
	% Response Within Each Category, By Sex*					
Male	30	12	20	7	31	274
Female	22	17	13	11	37	203
	% Response Within Each Category, By Age Group**					
18 or under	23	13	18	9	38	202
19 - 21	28	17	20	6	29	172
22 - 25	30	15	17	9	30	47
26 and over	30	13	9	12	36	56

*X^2 significant at .05 level; df=4

**Null hypothesis accepted; df=12

Proposition 14, approved 2 to 1 by the California Electorate, truck down the Rumford Fair Housing Act, leaving not only an unsubsided storm f controversy in its wake but raising the possibility of: 1) Ultimately being declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court and 2) cutting off the access to federal funds and loans of state financed housing projects. Most respondents (34%) "strongly disagreed" with Proposition 14 although the total "agrees" (40%) and the total "disagrees" (42%) were quite close.

The proportion of students who "strongly agreed" however was significantly higher for males. It is also noteworthy that the females were much less reluctant to take a stand (e.i., "no opinion") on this issue than the men. For example, they outvoted the men in both the mildly agree or disagree categories, displaying again, a less rigid attitude. Perhaps the most striking difference however, is the significantly lower proportion of women who were for Proposition 14 ("strongly agreed") on the one hand and the significantly higher number who were opposed to it on the other hand.

One recalls, of course, that Proposition 14 was not only a local issue but was weighted down with racial overtones. And while it was directly concerned with housing, through indirection it would ultimately have resulted in the integration of all community facilities. Coupled with the fact that recent empirical studies of voting behavior indicate that participation rates for women are equalling or exceeding those of men on questions related to home, schools, and community, it is difficult not to conclude that the women--and let us avoid neat euphemisms--are in the simplest understanding of the term, less prejudiced.

Age was not a significant determinant of attitudes on this question.

7. This year will witness an increase in the number and intensity of demonstrations by civil rights groups:

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	No Opinion	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Student Totals
	% Response Within Each Category					
All Students	27	29	21	17	6	477
	% Response Within Each Category, By Sex*					
Male	25	26	22	22	6	274
Female	29	34	21	10	5	203
	% Response Within Each Category, By Age Group**					
18 or under	25	27	23	18	7	202
19 - 21	22	32	24	16	6	172
22 - 25	40	21	19	19	2	47
26 and over	36	36	7	16	5	56

*X^2 significant at .05 level; df=4

**Null hypothesis accepted; df=12

Again, we find significant differences in attitude based on sex. The proportion of women in the "mildly agree" category was significantly higher while conversely, it was significantly lower in the "mildly disagree" category. Overall, there was a striking tendency for the ladies to increase the proportion of their response in each category as we move from the "strongly agree" to the "strongly disagree" end of the scale while the proportion of men respondents remains relatively stable in each category except for a precipitous drop in the "strongly disagree" category where the percentage of the male and female response is virtually equal.

How one measures the "increase in the number and intensity of demonstrations" is of course, a moot point and depends as much on one's geographical location as it does on one's political attitudes and ethnic background. In our judgement, the events that followed the administration of this survey, characterized an "intensity" of commitment not only on the part of civil rights advocates and opponents but more uniquely, on the part of Congress and the President. And while there has not necessarily been an increase in the number of demonstrations, we should not fail to keep in mind that the "long, hot summer" is yet to come.

Certainly, the Selma, Alabama issue which resulted in the voting rights "march to Montgomery," and left in its wake glaring incidents of violence in the confrontations between the citizenry and local police--not to mention the violent deaths of Reverend Reeb and Mrs. Viola Liuzzo--have left an indelible stain on the conscience of the nation. Neither can we forget--

whether ill-conceived or not--the so-called "sympathy demonstrations" throughout the land or the emerging phenomenon of a renascent church militant converging upon Selma.

Age was not a significant determinant of attitudes on this question.

III Conclusions

It is important that the scope of this study by kept in mind. This survey was administered during the last two weeks of the fall semester, 1964 to Political Science I students only. This was not an attempt to randomly sample the S. B. Valley College student body; rather a select group within that population. Consequently, we cannot infer (statistically, that is) what the probabilities are of the attitudes shown here being held by the student body in general. Nevertheless, on logical grounds, this inference is far from unreasonable. Political Science I, after all, is a required course for all transfer students. Thus it would not appear unreasonable to assume that the attitudes represented in this survey are characteristic of a majority or more of first year Valley College transfer students.

On the question of sex as a determinant of attitudes, we would venture an even broader generalization, citing as evidence two sources that we believe have indirect relevence. In the first instance we quote from Seymour Martin Lipset (Political Man, 1960, p. 206): "Women might be expected to have less concern with politics, and in almost every country they do vote less than men." On the other hand, participation does appear to be related to what is at stake. James G. March (Public Opinion Quarterly, 1953-54), for example, concluded on the basis of an empirical study of married couples that questions of local affairs, foreign policy and labor policy were increasingly becoming areas of concern and decision making on the part of women, although decreasing significantly in intensity, in the order given.

On the question of age as a determinant of attitudes, the results of a recent Mervin Fields California Poll (Riverside Press Enterprise, 13 April 1965) compare favorably with out findings on the second question relating to the Berkeley demonstrations. Although using broader age categories, the Field's Poll showed an unmistakable tendency for repondents to disapprove of student demonstrators as age increased.

Age	Disapprove of Student Goals and Tactics
21-29	52%
30-39	60%
40-49	65%
50-59	65%
60 and over	76%

There remain, of course, a variety of questions unanswered. To begin with, this survey was administered almost at the conclusion of the course. More informative answers could well have resulted from administering the same questionnaire on a "temporal" basis--that is, to measure whether or not there were significant changes in student attitudes over time. Controls for variables such as marital status, ethnic background or economic status--to cite but a few--were not included. In point of fact, however, our major

purpose was to evaluate student attitudes toward the Department's newly instituted T.V. lecture series--which, by the way, showed overwhelming student acceptance.

Thus, in spite of the fact that these particular attitude questions were of secondary importance, we believe we have incidentally gained some valuable insights about the determinants of student attitudes in particular (and by logical extrapolation, individuals in general, based on differences in sex and age) on questions of paramount contemporary interest to our discipline.